

Volunteers In Parks

Job Description Sheet

Volunteers can assist the National Park Service in many ways including visitor center operations, research work, historic and natural history programs, clerical assistance, historic restoration, park maintenance, and more.

**Job Title: Gardening Assistant,
Fort Smith National Historic Site**

Job Description:

The Fort Smith National Historic Site historic Officer's Garden is comprised approximately a dozen fruit trees and of dozens of heirloom plants, herbs, and flowers in three large beds. Due to the large amount of care and upkeep the garden demands, a Gardening Assistant is needed. This VIP will help with breaking up the soil, watering, planting, composting, weeding, and general plant upkeep of the garden. This VIP will also have the opportunity to work with the official Fort Smith National Historic Site Gardner in giving programs and talking to the public about plants and gardening techniques common during the mid-19th century. VIP uniform provided.

Skills Needed / Preferred:

- walking, lifting up to 40+ pounds (estimated), bending
- ability to be self-directed and to complete assigned tasks
- working outdoors in a variety of weather conditions
- knowledge of plants and gardening techniques

Goals / Outcomes of Job:

Making the Officer's garden and park grounds more pleasant and appealing for visitor's enjoyment, and also to promote the appreciation of gardening and healthy living in Fort Smith.

Benefits to Volunteers (note training if applicable):

Provide a fun and educational experience for visitors involving the Officer's Garden, helping them understand the significance of Fort Smith's story and how agriculture played into the lives of the soldiers and civilians living in the fort; Gain experience with the National Park Service; Ability to "give back" to the National Park Service; opportunity to stay fit by conducting various light duties. Official VIP uniform provided.

Safety Notice:

Garden VIPs will be working outdoors in a variety of weather conditions, including hot & sunny days, stormy weather, rain, cold, etc. There is potential for excessive exposure to sun, so the VIP must take precautions, including sunscreen, a hat, and limited time in the sun. There is a potential for becoming dehydrated or overheating, so the VIP should carry plenty of water and drink regularly while working outdoors at the park. Other safety hazards include snakes, ticks, chiggers, mosquitoes, poison ivy, briars, or lifting heavy items without assistance. Please use common sense and take every precaution and keep yourself safe. If in doubt, please check with park staff.

The VIP must not work outdoors in the likelihood of lightning, whether or not a storm is in progress. In an emergency, VIPs should take shelter inside the visitor center theatre. If Sebastian County is under a severe weather warning (tornado, thunderstorm, excessive heat) from the National Weather Service, VIPs should not be working anywhere outdoors. Shelter should be taken immediately.

Numbers of Volunteers needed:

Numbers Vary

Minimum Commitment:

This position may be requested throughout the months of March to October.

Location of Position:	Supervisor:	VIP Coordinator	Phone Number:
Officer's Garden	Cody Faber	Cody Faber	479-783-3961

Under 43 C.F.R. § 20.511, Departmental volunteers in the course of their official duties are prohibited from possessing firearms on property under control of the Department. Because of the stated purpose of the sponsors of Section 512 to provide uniformity under applicable state law from bureau-to-bureau, the potential liability issues that could result, and the absence of any criminal penalties applicable to this regulation, this Departmental policy continues to apply to all NPS/FWS employees and volunteers during their official duties. Volunteers who are not on official duty may possess firearms on Departmental lands under the same conditions applicable to members of the general public, according to P.L. 111-24, Section 512. For this purpose, volunteers are considered the same as other employees when engaged in their official activities.